

## **Major League DJZ Bio**

South African music powerhouse, Major League DJZ, are crafting the sound of the future with an exciting blend of immersive African sonics and futuristic production. The twin power duo born Bandile And Banele Mbere have sustained a high level of commercial success and received critical acclaim across a career that's spanned a decade and seen them play a critical role in rewiring the modern musical DNA of the rainbow nation while experimenting with elements from hip-hop, kwaito, afrobeats, and amapiano. Thanks to their throbbering brand of party-starting music, the brothers have achieved cultural icon status in their home nation and across the continent, collaborating with respected acts like Cassper Nyovest, Abidoza, Blaqnick, and Patoranking.

Born in exile to a family of anti-apartheid campaigners, the twin brothers grew up in Boston, Massachusetts where their family moved in the same social circle as legendary South African musicians like Hugh Masakela, Caiphus Semenya, Letta Mbulu, and Miriam Makeba. These associations offered the twins an unconventional education on South African jazz and popular African music which they paired with the hip-hop music that they loved in America. Upon the end of South Africa's apartheid regime, the brothers returned to the country and started to build a platform for themselves as party organizers. From throwing parties as high schoolers, the brothers began to experiment with DJ-ing, filling up for DJs who missed sets at their well-attended parties. Additionally, the brothers have held special edition parties in honour of western stars like Akon, Fat Joe, and 50 Cent.

Eventually, the brothers' interest in music evolved into music creation, seeing them raise their profile around the early 2010s with a series of dance-ready hip-hop-influenced mixtapes that melded their love for rap culture with the swaggering dance music of South Africa to thrilling effect. These early drops won them a core following that became the earliest supporters of their culture-shifting series of shows called Major League Gardens where the brothers showcased their music live in tandem with acts like Busiswah, Focalistic, and A-Reece. Moved by the rhythmic pulse of kwaito music, Major League DJZ soon became key figures in a movement called New Age Kwaito alongside popular rappers, Cassper Nyovest and Riky Rick. The New Age Kwaito helped to put a youthful spin on the national sound of post-apartheid South Africa and Major League DJZ helped were at the forefront of this movement, publishing the seminal *Ase Trap Tse Ke Pina Tsa Ko Kasi* E.P. with Focalistic in 2019.

Possessing similar elements to kwaito, the brothers embraced amapiano, another homebrew sound, just as it was rising to national popularity in early 2020. Two albums, *Pianochella* and *What's The Levolution*, both released in 2020 helped to document their fascination with amapiano as they sauntered between light-hearted ballads and more uptempo party ravers on both albums in collaboration with guests like Costa Titch, Kamo Mphela, and Stunna. The rising popularity of amapiano and the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic which meant that people couldn't congregate for their Major League Gardens shows meant that the brothers had to pivot to virtual means to keep their audience sated; this gap led to the creation of their wildly-popular Balcony Mix series. They've since collaborated with stars like Vigro Deep, Major Lazer, Tyler ICU, Boohle, and Kabza De Small across editions of the show.

Another album, titled *Outside*, followed in December 2021. Mostly recorded during quarantine in Ghana, the brothers used the album as an opportunity to connect amapiano with other sonic styles from across the continent. Three months after the release of *Outside*, Major League DJZ announced a global recording deal with Atlantic Records. Since then, they have gone on to break the world record for the longest DJ set performed by a duo, performing for 75 hours from September 2nd to 4th for a special edition of their Balcony Mix Xperience. Earlier in the year, the brothers fulfilled the premise of their 2020 hit “Pheli to Coachella,” performing on both weekends of the 2022 Coachella fest alongside long-time inspiration, Black Coffee, before following that feat with a sold-out headline show at the O2 Academy Brixton in May.